

Caregiver Assistance News

“CARING FOR YOU...CARING FOR OTHERS”

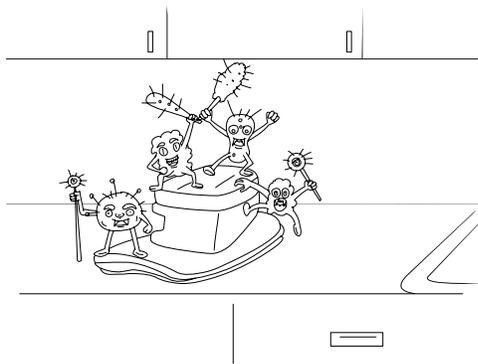
Keeping Pathogens Away

High-Tech Help in Killing Germs

In the age-old battle against germs, two *high-tech* gadgets are your best allies: the microwave and HEPA filters.

The Kitchen

The kitchen is the “dirtiest” room in the house! And in the kitchen, the worst culprits are the sponges and dishcloths. The damp, dark nooks and crannies of cleaning rags, sponges and scrubbers are perfect places for dangerous viruses and bacteria such as E.coli to grow.



Washing, even in hot water and detergent in the dishwasher, doesn't always kill all these germs. What works: Wash the item, then, while it's still wet, pop it in the microwave on High for 2 minutes. Your microwave is a quick way to disinfect anything, from cups used by someone with the flu, to washcloths and towels used in the sick room. (Be sure the item is microwave-safe and the cloth is damp and the cup has 1-2 inches of water. Be careful of the burning hot item.)

The Bathroom

The bathroom is the second “germiest” room in the house. Not toilet seats—but doorknobs, faucets and flush handles. Keep these surfaces wiped down regularly with hot soapy water and bleach to cut down the chances of those in your care getting sick.

The Air

The next best way to protect those you care for from colds, flu and infections is to keep the air around them clean. The simplest way to do this is to **encourage everyone to cover their nose and mouth for every cough and sneeze.**

Another way to keep the air clean is to use a HEPA (high efficiency particulate-arresting) filter device, which can be bought for under \$100. Check the capacity of the device you buy and make sure it is big enough for the room you use it in. You can even get HEPA filters for your vacuum cleaner, so you filter the air as you clean! And a HEPA filter on the air conditioner will remove almost all pollen, dust, mold and bacteria from air that passes through it. Perfect for anyone with allergies or breathing problems and an excellent way to prevent airborne infections.

Continued from page 1

Low-Tech Help: The Body's Immune System

Two more allies in the fight against germs are your immune system and your hands.

The immune system is the body's way of protecting itself against infection. As we come in contact with bacteria and viruses (some harmless, some bad), our body knows to keep these germs out the next time

they come near. To stay healthy, it's important to keep the immune system functioning. Good nutrition, with lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, is an important first step and getting plenty of restful sleep. Fresh air, exercise and sunshine are another. And finally, "Laughter is the best medicine." Humor love and happiness help keep the immune system working in peak condition.

Source: CDC; Public Health; Drgreene.com

Hand Washing

Simple hand washing is the *best way* for you and those you care for to keep germs away. The most common way that illnesses like colds and flu are spread is when we touch something that carries the virus, then touch our face, eyes, nose or mouth. To minimize the chance of spreading infection always wash your hands:

- ➔ before and after contact with the person in your care and with other people
- ➔ when returning from a trip outside the house, especially from "high-risk" places like doctor's offices, public transportation, etc.
- ➔ after using the toilet
- ➔ before preparing medications, doing a procedure or preparing food
- ➔ before meals and snacks

Washing Hands the Right Way

- ➔ Use plenty of soap and warm water
- ➔ *Rub* your hands for at least 30 seconds to produce lots of lather. Do this away from running water so the lather is not washed away.
- ➔ Use a nail brush on your nails; keep your nails trimmed
- ➔ Wash the front and back of hands, between fingers and at least 2 inches up your wrists.
- ➔ Rinse well under running water. Repeat the process.
- ➔ Dry your hands on a clean cloth or paper towel.

Soap and water are the best way to wash, but when these aren't available, a hand sanitizer is a good second-choice.



Taking Care of Yourself—A Happy Mouth Is a Healthy Mouth

We all know that too much stress can lead to headaches, neck pain and stomach upsets, but did you know that depression and persistent stress can also affect your oral health? Anxiety and worry—feeling like there's never enough time to get things done—can make you skip important oral hygiene routines like regular brushing, flossing and rinsing. Besides inviting cavities, this can also lead to gum disease and mouth sores, which can then affect your overall health. Depressed people tend to crave sweets, and this increases the chances for tooth decay. In addition, stress can cause clenching and grinding of teeth, which can wear down enamel.

No matter how stressed out you feel, remember that it is important to take care of your oral hygiene, exercise and eat healthy foods, especially fresh fruits and vegetables. Grab an apple and go for a walk. Your mood—and your mouth—will thank you!



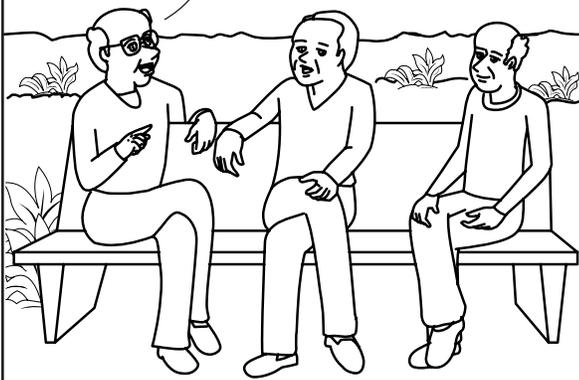
Source: WebMD

Inspiration

How you do anything, is how you do everything.

Live Life Laughing!

Some mistakes are too much fun to make only once.



Good Hand Hygiene In the Hospital Saves Lives

Each year in the United States hospitalized patients pick up more than a million infections while being treated for something else.

- ✎ You can help prevent infections by asking your doctors, nurses and visitors to wash their hands.
- ✎ Doctors and nurses encourage you to *remind them* to wash their hands.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Don't Fall—Be Safe

Some tile and bath cleaning products actually increase slipperiness. Be careful when using such products.

The Comfort of Home®

Our Purpose

To provide caregivers with critical information enabling them to do their job with confidence, pride, and competence.

Ordering Info

From the publishers of

The Comfort of Home®
Caregiver Series

available from...

CareTrust Publications LLC
PO Box 10283, Portland, OR 97296
800-565-1533
or www.comfortofhome.com

Comments and suggestions welcome.

©2013 CareTrust Publications LLC.

All rights reserved. Reproduction of any component of this publication is forbidden without a license from the publisher.

Some content in this publication is excerpted from *The Comfort of Home: Caregivers Series*. It is for informational use and not health advice. It is not meant to replace medical care but to supplement it. The publisher assumes no liability with respect to the accuracy, completeness or application of information presented or the reader's misunderstanding of the text.

SAFETY TIPS – Dog Bites

Pets enhance lives. However, even small dogs can be threatening if they're worked up, and any size dog can inflict a painful bite. In the US, nearly 5 million people are attacked by dogs every year. Almost one in five of those who are bitten require medical attention.

Always wash your hands after contact with pets. People with weakened immune systems should not empty litter boxes. If you or the person in your care is bitten by a dog or cat, take care of the wounds properly, as even minor bites can cause infection. See a medical professional promptly if you suffer serious wounds or if you haven't had a tetanus shot in the past 5 years.

- Apply gentle pressure to stop minor bleeding. Use a clean cloth or sterile gauze pad. If bleeding is serious or if it won't stop after several minutes of applying pressure, seek medical attention.
- Use warm water and soap to gently cleanse the wound.
- Use a sterile band-aid (for very small cuts) or sterile bandages.
- Apply fresh bandages and apply antibiotic ointment at least 1 or 2 times a day.

Source: WebMD; CDC

Caregiver Assistance News

“ C A R I N G F O R Y O U ... C A R I N G F O R O T H E R S ”

Q U I C K Q U I Z

Thoroughly washing your hands often is your first line of defense against the spread of germs and viruses causing many illnesses—and not just the common cold. Read the issue and answer True or False to the questions below.

1. The damp, dark nooks and crannies of cleaning rags, sponges and scrubbers are perfect places for dangerous viruses and bacteria to grow.
T F
2. The most common way that illnesses like colds and flu are spread is when we touch something that carries the virus, then touch our face, eyes, nose or mouth.
T F
3. The microwave oven is a great way to disinfect items that are microwave-safe.
T F
4. You've got two allies in the fight against germs: your immune system and your hands.
T F
5. Washing items in hot water and detergent will kill all germs.
T F
6. To stay healthy, it's important to keep the immune system functioning well.
T F
7. It is especially important to wash hands when returning from a trip outside the house, especially from “high-risk” places like doctor's offices.
T F
8. People with weakened immune systems should not empty litter boxes.
T F
9. The simplest way to keep the air clean and germ-free is to cover your nose and mouth for every cough and sneeze.
T F
10. Minor bites from a pet cannot cause an infection.
T F

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____